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[THE] VEDAS AND THEIR TEACHINGS

WRITTEN BY

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ANAND KUTIR, JWALAPUR

Published by
The Secretary
VISHWA VEDA PARISHAD

First edition :
Copies 1000
December 1976

Price :
In India 75 Paise
Abroad 1 Shilling

PREFACE

The Vedas and their Teachings'

This small book has been written in an easily understandable language and style in the form of questions and answers for the benefit of those English educated people who are either too busy or not inclined to read big books on the Vedas and their teachings like the authors' वेदों का यथार्थ स्वरूप and others. This will give them some general ideas about the Vedas and their sublime teachings and will dispel misconceptions mostly propagated by the western scholars and their followers like polytheism, polygamy, animal sacrifices, meat-eating and drinking wine etc. विश्व वेद परिषद् or World Vedic Council has been founded to propagate the Vedic teachings in their true perspective and to dispel misconceptions about them. With this object in view, suitable books will be published from time to time of which the first is the Hindi Book named वेदों का महत्त्व published by Acharya Virendra ji Shastri M A. Secretary of the Vishva Veda Parishad at Lucknow. This is the second in that series.

Dharmananda Sarasvati Vidya Martanda.
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14-12-76. Anand Kutir, Jwalapur.

The Vedas And Their Teachings

QUESTION—1

What is meant by the word VEDA ? How many VEDAS are there and what are their main themes ?

ANSWER

The meaning of the word 'VEDA' is knowledge. It is derived from the root विद् to know. By VEDA we mean the knowledge given by the Omnipresent and Omniscient Lord of the universe at the commencement of the human creation for the harmonious development and growth of mankind. As worldly parents give knowledge to their children for their welfare, so God who is our Divine Father and Mother revealed the Eternal Truths through the Vedas for the well being of all people. God is within and without all beings and things. The sages' hearts were pure and receptive and God inspired them with knowledge. The Vedas are four in number namely Rigveda, Yajurveda, Sama Veda and Atharva Veda.

The main theme of the Rigveda is knowledge of all objects material and spiritual. The main theme of the Yajurveda is action. It deals mainly with Yajnas i.e. good actions done with the object of doing good to others. The main theme of the Sama Veda is devotion and contemplation that leads to peace and bliss. In the Atharva Veda, there is the combination and

synthesis of these three i.e. knowledge, action and devotion. The meaning of the word Atharva is a non-violent Yogi of steady mind. The Atharva Veda is also known by the name of Brahma Veda as it deals with the science of God and Yoga. In it there are many hymns dealing with medical science, so it is the original source of the Ayurveda or the science of life.

QUESTION—2

When were the Vedas composed and by whom? Who were Rishis of the Mantras if not their authors as generally believed by many western scholars?

ANSWER

As pointed out before when answering the first question regarding the VEDAS, the Vedas were revealed by God in the commencement of human creation for the guidance of mankind through four Rishis (seers) named Agni, Vayu, Aditya and Angira. These four Rishis imparted that Divine Knowledge to others. The Rishis of the Mantras or hymns are not their authors, but the seers who saw or grasped the secret of the Vedas through tapas (penance and thought), ऋषयो मन्त्रद्रष्टारः ।

The Rishis are seers of the secret of the Mantras and hymns. As the Vedas are eternal and of Divine origin, it is wrong to take the Rishis as those who composed the mantras. They were seers and not composers or authors of the mantras. This is a point always to be borne in mind.

QUESTION—3

Is it rational or reasonable to believe that the

Vedas were revealed by Omniscient God at the commencement of the human creation, if so, what is the nature of Revelation ?

ANSWER

It is quite reasonable to believe that the Omniscient and Omnipotent God who is our Divine Father, revealed perfect and infallible knowledge for the guidance and welfare of mankind.

As it is the duty of parents to impart knowledge to their children and they fail in their duty, if they do not do so, in the same manner, God who is the ocean of mercy, gave true knowledge of all objects, actions and devotion through the Vedas at the commencement of human creation. Had he not done so, men could not attain true knowledge only through their own efforts and they would have wandered in the dark. A great scientist of England–Dr. Fleming. M.A., D. Sc., F. R. S. rightly remarked in the course of his address on Supreme Intelligence in and above nature" at Browning Hall London during the science week celebrated from 23rd to 29th Nov. 1914, that :

"If we are to obtain more solid assurance, it can not come to the mind of man groping feebly in the dim light of un-assisted season, but only by a communication **made directly from this Supreme Mind to the finite mind of man.**"

(Science and Religion by Seven men of science" Lecture by Dr. Fleming M A., D. Sc., F. R. S.–P. 53).

Not only great scientists like Fleming M.A., D. Sc., F. R. S. but all prominent philosophers including the authors of the system of Indian philosophy and the Greek Philosophy like Plato have admitted the necessity of revelation. How the authors of the Darshanas have unanimously sung the glory of Vedas as Revealed Scriptures will be pointed out later on. Here let us see what the Greek Philosopher - Plato regarded as father of the Western philosophy, stated about the subject in hand.

"We will wait for one, be he a God or an inspired man to instruct in religious duties **and to take away the darkness from our eyes.**"

—Plato's Alcitriades.

"We must seize upon the best human views in navigating the dangerous sea of life, if there is no safer or less perilous way, no stouter vessel or **Divine Revelation** for making this **voyage.**"

Plato's Phaed.

In Diologues of Plato—translated into English by Jewett we find these remarkable words in this connection :

"A man should persevere until he has achieved one of the two things, either he should discover, or be taught the truth about them, or if this is impossible I would have him take the best and the most irrefragable of human theories and let this be raft upon which he sails through life–not without risk, as I admit, if he

cannot find **some word of God which will more surely** and safely carry him."

—Dialogues of Plato-translated by Jewett.

Another eminent Greek Philosopher – Socretes also gave expression to the same idea saying :

"You may resign yourself in sleep and give yourself upto despair unless **God in His Goodness, shall vouchsafe to send you instruction.**"

Quoted here from the "Brahma Samaj and Ecclectic Systems" Madras.

As it is absolutely necessary to frame Rules and Regulations before starting an association or society, So it is quite reasonable to believe that the Almighty God made Rules and Regulations and manifested them for the welfare and guidance of humanity before creating this vast Association in the form of the universe. No Government can be conducted and no evil-doers can be punished for committing theft, adultery and cheating etc. unless there are laws made for the purpose before the government is able to function properly.

So the Omniscient and Omnipotent God made and menifested the eternal, physical and moral laws and revealed them through the Vedas at the commencement of the human creation. There is nothing irrational or superstitious in this belief.

QUESTION—4

Except from the stand point of the Evolution

Theory, is there any need to study the Vedas in this age of advanced science; if so, what is it ?

ANSWER

Prof. Maxmuller and some other Orientalists of the west have also admitted the study of the Vedas to be almost indispensable for scholars, but that is mainly from the stand point of the Evolution Theory. Prof. Maxmuller has stated in this connection—

"The Vedic literature opens to us a chamber in the education of the human race to which we can find no parallel anywhere else. Who ever cares for the historical growth of our language and thought, who ever cares for the first intelligible development of religion and mythology, who ever cares for the first foundation of science Astronomy metronomy, grammar and Etymology, who ever cares for the first intimation of the first philosophical thoughts, for the first attempt at regulating family life, village life as founded on religious ceremonials, tradition and contact, must in future pay full attention to the study of the Vedic Literature."

—India, what it can teach us.

In his 'History of the Ancient Sanskrit Literature' Prof. Maxmuller wrote—

"In the history of the world, Veda fiills, up a gap which no literature in any language could do. It carries us back to the time of which we have no record

anywhere and gives us the very words of the growth of the man, of whom we would otherwise form a vague estimate by means of conjectures of inferences. As long as man continues to take interest in the history of his race and so long as we collect in libraries and museums the relics of former ages, the first place in that long row of books which contains the records of Aryan Branch of mankind will be long for ever to the Vedas."

So it is from the point of evolution and history that Prof. Maxmuller and many western scholars advocate the study of Vedas which stand point is entirely deroneous, being based on prejudice, pre-conceived notions and Christian bias. They ofcourse regard the Vedas as the oldest books in the library of mankind, but also childish and silly containing the most primitive and therefore barbarous teachings.

As a matter of fact, the important study of the Vedas cuts at the very root of the evolution theory as they advocate the the worship of one God, Universal love and friendship. Exalted position of women, monogamy, democracy of the purest kind and election of King by the people etc. which principally are regarded on all hands as the tests of the most advanced civilization. Therefore the study of the Vedas is essential, nay indispensable for every one who desires to acquire perfect knowledge about God, about soul, about their relation, about Matter and his individual, domestic, social, national and international duties. It is indispensible for attaining peace and bliss and for the establishment of world peace based on spiritual foundations.

What is required to day is a synthesis of materialistic advancement of science and spirituality, knowledge, action and devotion, faith and reason, individualism and socialism, enjoyment and renunciation, science and religion. It is the study of the Vedas that can lead to such synthesis as the teachings of the Vedas are most rational, scientific and universal. It is the study of the Vedas that can lead to universal love and friendship as their sublime teaching is 'मित्रस्याहं चक्षुषा सर्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षे मित्रस्य चक्षुषा समीक्षामहे ॥ (य० ३६. १८) ।'

May I look upon all beings on earth as my friends. May we all look upon one another with the eyes of friends.

As regards the nature of Revelation, it must be borne in mind that on account of His Omnipresence and Omnipotence,God does not stand in need of paper, pen or ink, nor does He stand in need of uttering words with physical mouth like human beings. It was enough for Him to inwardly prompt the pure and receptive hearts of the sages in order to instil in them perfect knowledge. In the Vedas, we find our individual, domestic, social, national and international duties mentioned quite clearly for our perfect guidance.

QUESTION—5

Do the Vedas teach polytheism, Henotheism, Monism or Monotheism ?

ANSWERE

Before answering the question; let me explain

what is meant by Polytheism, Henotheism, Monism and Monotheism. By Polytheism is meant according to the Oxford Dictionary English Language :

'belief in the plurality of Gods,each with a sphere of his own in the government of the world.

—Greek Poly – means many, Theos–God.

In simple words, it means worship of many Gods or gods.

By Monism is meant according to the same Dictionary :

'development of the all or universe from a monad or single element.'

(Gr. monos–single)

It corresponds to what is generally called as the principle that Brahma (God) alone exists and nothing else.

Henotheism – This is a word coined by Prof. Maxmuller which has been defined as follows by Prof. Clayton in his 'Rigveda and Vedic Religion'—

'In his writings Maxmuller constantly referred to this and coined the word 'henotheism or kathenotheism to what he regarded as a peculiar character of the ancient Vedic religion. It denotes that each of several divinities is regarded as highest, the one that was worshipped and that therefore treated as if he were absolute being independent and supreme alone

present to the mind of the worshipper.'

— Clayton in 'Rigveda and Vedic Religion.

By Monotheism is meant according to the Oxford English Dictionary :

'Belief In the existence of only one God.

The Vedas teach monotheism or the worship of one God in the purest form. They teach that God is Omnipresent, Omniscient and Omnipotent Lord of the universe. He is absolutely formless, perfect, truest and merciful.

According to Vedas, such an omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent God is one and He alone is to be worshipped by all with pure heart and noble deeds. The Vedas declare :

य एक इत् तमुष्टुहि कृष्टीनां विचर्षणिः ।
पतिर्जज्ञे वृषक्रतुः ।। ऋ० ६. ४५. १३

O man, praise God who is one and one only and who is omniscient and omnipotent Lord of all beings.

एक एव नमस्यो विक्ष्वीड्यः ।। अथ० २. २१

One God alone should be worshipped by all people. He is Adorable एक एव नमस्यः सुशेवाः—Atharva 2.2.2

One God alone who is the Giver of true happiness and bliss is worthy of being worshipped by all.

It is to be understood clearly that in the Vedas Agni, Mitra, Varuna, Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva and other words of that type have been principally used for God.

For instance, we are expressly told in the Rigveda 1. 164. 46.

इन्द्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहुरथो दिव्यः स सुपर्णो गरुत्मान् ।
एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः ॥

ऋ० १. १६४. ४६

i. e. that Supreme Spirit is the Protector of all and He pervades and gives light to all bright objects. He is called Indra the Glorious Lord, Mitra or Friend, Varuna or the Greatest and the Best. Though one. He is called by the wise, by many names such as Agni (the Abdable Leader) Yama-Ruler or Controller मातरिश्वा or the mighty and all—prevading.

In other part of the Rigveda we find :—

सुपर्णं विप्राः कवयो वचोभिरेकं सन्तं बहुधा कल्पयन्ति ।
ऋग्वेद १०. ११४. ५ ।

The learned and the wise describe the one existing God in many forms of expression. In the Rigveda 10. 82. 3 the idea of one God is put in words like —

यो नः पिता जनिता यो विधाता धामानि वेद भुवनानि विश्वा ।
यो देवानां नामधा एक एव तं संप्रश्नं भुवना यन्त्यन्या ॥

ऋ० १०. ८२. ३

Our Father who is the All-Creating God and

who is the Dispenser of justice knowth all the worlds and all things existing. He is the only one Supreme Being, the name-giver of all the devas or shining objects. Him alone all other beings attain for He is the only Solution of all our interrogation.

The omnipresence and omnipotence of God has been described poetically in the Vedas in beautiful words like—

विश्वतश्चक्षुरुत विश्वतोमुखो विश्वतो बाहुरुत विश्वतस्पात् ।
सं बाहुभ्यां धमति संपतत्रैर्द्यावाभूमी जनयन् देव एकः ।।

ऋ० १०. ८१. ३

He whose eyes are everywhere, whose mouth is in all sides, whose arms are all around and whose feet are in all directions is the only one Divine Being who has created the heaven and the earth and by means of His all-spreading Arms He infuses life into all beings.

In Rig. 10. 21. 10 we read :

प्रजापते न त्वदेतान्यन्यो विश्वा जातानि परिताबभूव ।
यत्कामास्ते जुहुमस्तन्नो अस्तु वयं स्याम पतयो रयीणाम् ।।

ऋ० १०. १२१. १०

O Lord of all creatures, no other than Thou can control and govern all these created things. May the things desiring which we pray to Thee be ours. May we be lords of all good wealth – material as well as spiritual.

How unambiguously the idea of Oneness of God is mentioned in this Mantra and we are surprised to find that the hymn (10. 121) in which this Mantra is found is regarded as 'modern' by many western scholars.

Prof. Maxmuller has remarked in the 'Vedic Hymns' Vol. I—

"(This is one of the hymns which has always been suspected as 'modern' by European interpreters.)"

Regarding this mantra प्रजापते न त्वदेतानि–Prof. Maxmuller remarks :—

"This last hymn is to my mind the most suspicious of all.

—Vedic Hymns Vol. I by Prof. Maxmuller. 3–4

These remarks show how prejudiced have many Western Scholars been against Vedic monotheism as it cuts at the very root of their favourite Evolution Theory.

In the Atharva Veda we find the idea of the oneness of God in such unmistakable and clear terms as—

न द्वितीयो न तृतीयश्चतुर्थो नाप्युच्यते ।
न पंचमो न षष्ठः सप्तमो नाप्युच्यते ।
नाष्टमो न नवमो दशमो नाप्युच्यते ।
स एष एक एक वृदेक एव ॥

अथर्व० १३. ४. २०

सर्वे अस्मिन् देवा एकवृतो भवन्ति ॥

अथर्व० १३. ४. २१

He is called neither the second, nor the third nor yet fourth. He is called neither the fifth, nor the sixth nor yet the seventh. He is neither the eighth nor the ninth or tenth. He takes care of all that breathes and of all that does not breathe. He has got all this conquering power. **He is the one, alone and only one.** All these luminuous forces of nature. become one in Him, as He is their controller.

How emphatically the Unity of God is expressed in such passages and how absurd and false is the view advocated by some prejudiced Western Scholars that the Vedas teach polytheism.

The Vedas do not also advocate monism but the eternity of God, soul and Matter. In mantras like :—

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते ।
तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्यनश्नन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति ॥

ऋ० १. १६४. २०

न तं विदाथ य इमा जजानान्यद् युष्माकमन्तरं बभूव ॥

ऋ० १०. ८२. ७

इन्द्रं क्रतुं न आभर पिता पुत्रेभ्यो यथा ।
शिक्षा णो अस्मिन् पुरुहूत यामनि जीवा ज्योतिरशीमहि ॥

ऋ० ७-३२-२६, साम० २५९, अथर्व० २०-७९-२

ओं क्रतो स्मर क्लिबे स्मर कृतं स्मर ॥

यजु० ४०-१५

वेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तमादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ।
तमेव विदित्वातिमृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय ॥
यजु० ३१-१८

The difference between God, soul & Matter has been clearly pointed out. In the first of these mantras, it is said allegorically that two birds sit on a tree but one of them (soul) enjoys the fruits of actions, while the other (God) looks on as Lord and gives good or bad fruits.

In the second it is stated :

'O men, You do not know Him (God) who has created all these things of the world, who is within you, but different from you.'

In the third there is the prayer :

'O God, enlighten us as a father enlightens his children. Teach and guide us in this world, so that we souls may enjoy light of wisdom.'

In the fourth, the injunction is :

'O active soul, remember God, remember Him for the attainment of strength and think of your deeds.'

In the fifth, a wise man declares :

I (soul) know this Supreme All-prevading Resplendent God. It is only by knowing Him that we can cross over the ocean of death. There is no other way for the attainment of emancipation.'

These and hundreds of other mantras prove beyond the shadow of doubt that the Vedas do not advocate monism, but monotheism in its purest form.

Not only we the followers of the Vedic Dharma, but even other impartial thinkers belonging to different faiths have admitted that the Vedas teach pure monotheism.

For instance, W. D. Brown-an English man has stated in the 'Superiority of the Vedic Religon.'

'It (Vedic Religon) recognises but one God.'

Count Biornstienna of Russia has stated in 'Theogony of the Hindus' after quoting some mantras from the Vedas :

'These sublime ideas can not fail to convince us that the Vedas recognise only one God who is Almighty, Infinite, Enternal. Self-existent, the Light and Lord of the universe.'

Theogony of Hindus, p. 83

Shri Dadachanji B. A., LL. B., D. Th. a renowned Parasi Scholar in his well-known book named 'Philosophy of Zoroatrianism and comparative study of religions' has clearly and most un-ambiguously stated that 'The Vedas teach nothing but monotheism of the purest kind.'

Sir Yamin Khan Kt. C.I.E. has rightly stated in his book entitled 'God, soul and universe in Science and Islam.'

'Originally the conception of God among the Hindus was right when they believed Him to be unit and omnipresent, but they strayed away from their original conception.'

'Swami Dayananda Saraswati-a man of great learning started preaching the **Old Religion of the Vedas which conceived unity of God.'**

—God, Soul and Universe by Sir Yamin Khan, p. 3:

QUESTION—6

If there is pure monotheism in the Vedas what is the morning of 33 Devas mentioned so often in the

Vedas ? Does it not mean that these 33 Devas are to be worshipped ?

ANSWERE

The word देव (Deva) is derived from the root दिवु which has got ten meanings.

दिवु-क्रीडा विजिगीषा व्यवहारद्युतिस्तुतिमोदमद स्वप्नकान्ति-गतिषु-पाणिनीय धातुपाठे ।

It means Deva is used in the sense of sporting, desire to conquer, pursuit, brilliancy, praise, exhilaration, sleep, knowledge, motion and acquisition. As such, it is an epithet applied to the sun, the moon, an other forces of nature like fire, wind etc. Yaskacharya — the celebrated author of the Vedic Philology (Nirukta) interprets the word देव as :

देवो दानाद्वा दीपनाद् वा द्योतनाद् वा द्युस्थानोभवतीति वा ।

निरुक्ते ७-१६

That which confers some benefit upon us, can illuminate things i. e. explain or throw light upon them and that which is the source of light is देव (Deva). It is therefore, entirely wrong to translate the word देव everywhere as God. It may be used for all brilliant objects as well as learned men of truthful nature.

सत्य संहिता वै देवाः ॥ —ऐतरेय ब्रह्मणो १–६

विद्वांसो वै देवाः ॥ —शतपथ ब्राह्मणो ३-७-३-१६ ।

By 33 devas mentioned in the Vedas are meant not 33 Gods as Griffith in his translation of the Vedas has always written Gods with G in capital letters as

misinterpreted by some Western Scholars, but the objects mentioned in the Shatapath Brahman and other Brahmanas which are commentaries on the Vedas.

कतमे ते त्रयस्त्रिंशत् इति अष्टौवसवः। एकादश रुद्रा एकादशादित्याः त एकत्रिंशत् इन्द्रश्चैव प्रजापतिश्च त्रयस्त्रिंशाविति।

कतमे वसव इति। अग्निश्च पृथिवी च वायुश्चान्तरिक्षं चादित्यश्च द्यौश्च चन्द्रमाश्च नक्षत्राणि चैते वसवः। एतेषु होदं सर्वं वसुहितम्। एते होदं सर्वं वासयन्ते तद् यदिदं सर्वं वासयन्ते तस्माद् वसव इति।

कतमे रुद्रा इति। दशेमे पुरुषे प्राणा आत्मैकादशस्ते यदास्मात्मर्त्याच्छरीरादुत्क्रामन्ति अथ रोदयन्ति तद् यद् रोदयन्ति तस्माद् रुद्रा इति।

कतम आदित्या इति। द्वादशमासाः संवत्सरस्य एत आदित्याः। एते होदं सर्वमाददाना यन्ति यदिदं सर्वमाददाना यन्ति तस्मादादित्या इति।

कतम इन्द्रः कतमः प्रजापतिरिति। स्तनयित्नुरेवेन्द्रो यज्ञः प्रजापतिरिति। कतम एको देव इति। स ब्रह्मत्यदित्याचक्षते।

—शतपथ ब्राह्मणे : १४-१६

The meaning of the above is ;

There are 33 devas which manifest the glory of God. 8 Vasus, 11 Rudras, 12 Adityas, Indra and Prajapati.

The eight Vasus are :

1. Agni or fire, 2. Earth, 3. Air, 4. Atmosphere, 5. Super tenestrial space, 6. Sun, 7. Moon, and 8. Stars.

These are called Vasus (Abodes) for the whole group of existence resides in them.

The eleven Rudras are ten Prana (vital forces) enlivening the human frame and the eleventh is the Atma or the human soul.

The 12 Adityas are 12 solar months, making the course of time. They are called Aditya, by their cyclic motion, they produce changes in all objects and hence lapse of the term of existence of each object. Indra is all-pervading electricity. Prajapati is Yajna. God is the one Deva who is Adorable. Acccording to the Vedas, God is the Supreme Lord of all the devas. They tell us plainly :

ततो देवानां समवर्ततासुरेकः कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम ।
यो देवेष्वधि देव एक आसीत् कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम ।।
ऋ. १०-१२१

God is the one Life and Lord of all devas and therefore we worship Him who is Giver of all Happiness, Peace and Bliss with devotion.

QUESTION—7

What is the significance of the devas like Agni, Indra, Mitra, Varuna etc. from the spiritual, social and cosmic point of view ?

ANSWER

Agni, Mitra, Varuna, Indra and other word have got many meanings from the spiritual, social and cosmic standpoints.

For instance, the word Agni stands primarily for God as pointed out before on the basis of the mantras like.

एकं सद् विप्रा बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः ॥
ऋ. १-१६४-६६

Where it is clearly stated that though God is one, He is called by wise men by various names such as Agni, Yama, Matarishva, Indra, Mitra, Varuna etc. So from the spiritual point of view the word Agni stands for God as the Supreme Leader.

अग्निः कस्मादग्रणीर्भवति । —निरुक्ते ।

From the social point of view, the word Agni denotes a good enlightened leader.

अग्निः—अग्रणीः अग्रेनयतीति—अग — गतौ गतेस्त्रयोऽर्थाः जानं गमनं प्राप्तिश्च ।

Here the first meaning of knowledge or enlightenment is taken.

The word Indra primarily stands for God as it is derived from इदि परमैश्वर्ये – i. e. the Lord of the world.

From the social point of view, the word stands for the King and Commander in chief of the army– सेना इन्द्राणी इन्द्रः—सेनापतिः ।

From the cosmic point of view, it stands for electicity. The word मित्र (Mitra) stands primarily for God as the True Friend of all, From the social point of view, it means a man who is friendly to all. From the cosmic point of view, it means the sun and the Prana (vital energy).

Varuna means primarily as God the Best and the most acceptable. From the social point of view, it stands for a highly learned person, who is to be accepted by all and who dispels darkness of ignorance. From the cosmic point of view, the word stands for water and the moon.

In the same manner, other Vedic words which are wrongly supposed to be the names of different Gods denote primarily God and secondarily wise leaders or forces of nature. While explaining them properly, context must be taken into consideration besides the adjectives and epithets used with them.

QUESTION—7

What is the meaning of the word Yajna used in the Vedas so frequently ? Do the Vedas sanction animal sacrifices as believed by many eastern and western scholars, if not, what is the real meaning of Gomedha, Narmedha, Ashvamedha etc.

ANSWER

The word Yajna in derived from the root यज which has three meanings देवपूजा, संगतिकरण, दान Worship of God and enlightened persons, association with a righteous person and charity. So in the Vedic literature, the word Yajna is used in a very comprehensive sense including all good acts done for the welfare of all.

The Vedas do not at all sanction animal sacrifices. The synomymous term for the Yajna in the Vedic lexicon called Nighantu is अध्वर (Adhvara)

which has been explained by Maharshi Yaskacharya–an ancient Vedic etymologist as :

अध्वर इति यज्ञनाम ध्वरति हिंसा कर्मा तत्प्रतिषेधः ।।
निरुक्ते० १. ७

Adhvara means where there is no violence of any kind or the act which is perfectly non-violent. This word Adhvara has been used in all the four Vedas hundreds of times clearly proving that the Vedas do not sanction animal sacrifices. On the other hand they tell us quite unambiguously that—

अग्ने यं यज्ञमध्वरं विश्वतः परिभूरसि ।
स इद् देवेषु गच्छति ।।
ऋ० १. १. ४

That only non-violent noble sacrifices are acceptable to God and His devotees.

राजन्तमध्वराणां गोपामृतस्य दीदिविम् ।।
ऋ० १. १. ८

Meaning that it is only in the non-violent sacrifices that God shines.

In the Yajurveda which mainly deals with the Yajnas, we are asked to look upon all beings on earth as our friends.

मित्रस्याहं चक्षुषा सर्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षे मित्रस्य चक्षुषा समीक्षामहे ।।
यजु० ३६-१८

In the fourteenth chapter of the Yajurveda we read.

द्विपादव चतुष्पात् पाहि ॥

यजु० १४-८

i. e. protect all bipeds and quadrupeds.

गां मा हिंसीरदितिं विराजंगाम् ॥

Never kill a cow but treat her as mother. In the Same Veda it is clearly stated :

न कि देवा इनीमसि न क्यायोपयोपयामसि ।
मन्त्रश्रुत्यं चरामसि ॥

साम. १७६

i. e. we act according to the injuctions contained in the Vedic hymns. We never kill animals.

The real nature of such wicked persons who introduced this diabolical practice of animal sacrifices is stated in the Maha Bharat Shanti Parva as :

अव्यवस्थितमर्यादैर्विमूढैर्नास्तिकैर्नरैः ।
संशयात्मभिरव्यक्तैर्हिंसा समनुवर्णिता ॥

i. e. It is only such absolutely foolish people who do not know the real import and tradition of the ancient Dharma who are atheists नास्तिकैः and who are sceptics संशयात्मभिः that have mentioned slaughter of animals.

It is thus clear that the Vedas do not at all sanction the slaughter of the cows or other animals either in Yajnas or for the purpose of eating. The Vedic Yajnas in which many nourishing and disease-removing ingredients are put, promote health by purifying the atmosphere. Even fatal diseases like T. B. have been successfully cured through the Yajnas by Dr Phundan Lal M. D. (of Bareilly) and other physicians.

The word Medha (मेध) used sometimes for Yajna is derived from मेधा — मेधा संगमनुयो: and therefore means to increase intellect and unity. In words like नृमेध न र मे ध it means not to kill men, but to create unity among men. In words like गोमेध the word गो is used for earth and therefore it means to till and purify the ground.

It is exactly in this sense that the word गोमेध (Gomez) has been used in the Zend Avesta of the Parsis. The cows are called अघ्न्या in the Vedas hundreds of times which means those which are never to be killed. अश्वमेध means the proper administration of the State to promote or consolidate the Power of the State.

राष्ट्रं वा अश्वमेधः (शतपथ १३-१-६-३) वीर्यं वा
अश्व: शत० २-१-४-२

QUESTION—10

What are the distinguishing features of the Vedic teachings? Why do you hold the Vedas to be the Revealed Scriptures? Why has the glory of the Vedas been sung by all seers and sages of India?

ANSWER

The distinguishing features of the teachings of Vedas are :

1. There is beautiful synthesis in the teachings of the Vedas between knowledge, action and devotion. No where else do we find such synthesis.

According to the Vedas, the combination of all the three leads to emancipation; mere knowledge, mere action (however good it may be) and mere devotion is not enough to lead to liberation.

2. The synthesis between Shradha (faith based upon truth) and Medha (pure reason) that we find in the Vedas is not to be found in any scripture. The Vedas lay stress on the cultivation and proper combination of faith and reason. The prayer taught by the Vedas in the Mantras like :

अग्ने समिधमाहार्षं बृहते जातवेदसे ।
स मे श्रद्धां च मेधां च जातवेदाः प्रयच्छतु ॥
अथर्व. १९-६४-१

is that the omnipresent and omniscient God may endow us with pure faith and pure reason. The teachings and principles of the Vedic Dharma are rational. They do not conflict with pure reason like the dogmas of many religions which lay all emphasis on mere faith in religious matters.

3. In the Vedas we find all our individual, domestic social, national and internal and international duties

clearly mentioned. No where else is such a comprehensive view of human duties given.

4. The Vedas lay stress on the equal development of all physical, mental and spiritual faculties. This ideal of harmonious development is not to be found so clearly in any other religious book.

5. The Vedas point out synthesis through the Varnashrama system between individualism and socialism, between proper enjoyment and renunciation. In no other religious book is there such a beautiful synthesis or the middle path avoiding all extremes to be found.

6. In the Vedas there is synthesis between religion and science.

W. D. Brown — a distinguished English Scholar has rightly pointed out in his well known book Superiority of the Vedic Religion" saying—

"The Vedic Religion recognises only One God. It is a throughly scientific religion where religion and science meet hand in hand. Here theology is based upon Science and Philosophy."

Lui Jacalliot—a renowned French Scholar has gone further and stated most unambiguously—

"Astonishing fact — The Hindu Revelation (Veda) is of all Revelations the only one whose ideas are in perfect harmony with modern Science; as it proclaims the slow and gradual formation of the world."

—The Bible in India by Lui Jacalliot Vol. II Chap. I, p. 186.

7. The conception of God given in the Vedas is most rational, scientific and philosophical. The Vedas teach the worship of one God only who is onmipresent, omniscient and omnipotent Creator of the world. He is just and Merciful Dispenser of Justice. He is the efficient cause (and not material cause) of the Universe. He is absolutely Formless. He is never in need of taking incarnation being Almighty. Such pure Monotheism is not to be found in any other religious book.

As shown before, many Western impartial scholars like Brown (W. D.) Earnest Wood, Count Biornsterna Parasi scholars like Dadachanji B. A.. LL. B. D. Th. Muslims like Sir Yamin Khan have admitted that the Vedas teach pure monotheism.

8. The eighth distinguishing feature of the teaehings af the Vedas is that they maintain synthesis between अभ्युदय Abhyudaya -- Worldly prosperity and नि:श्रेयस–Salvation or emancipation.

The Vedas' definition of Dharma pointed out by the saga Kanada–the author of the Vaisheshika Shastra is—

यतोऽभ्युदयनि: श्रेयस सिद्धिः स धर्मः।।

i. e. Dharma is that which leads to worldly prosperity and also to the emancipation. So in the Vedas and Vedas alone there is synthesis between material advancement brought about by the scientific knowledge and spirituality.

The Vedas are the sources of material as well as spiritual sciences. Such a claim can not be made for any other religious book. For instance, in the Bible we are told by Jesus Christ—

"It is easier for a camel to enter the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." (Matt. 17. 23)

The same is the case with monism with its theory of illusion, Buddhism, and many other religions.

9. The ninth distinguishing feature of the teachings of the Vedas in that they are universal being rational, scientific and non-sectarian.

When it is said in any religious book that "No other name has been given on earth except the name of Christ by which you must be saved (The Bible–Acts of the Apostles) or that 'You are condemned already as you have not believed in the name of the only begotten son of God." Jesus Christ (John) or faith in the prophet Mohammed as the last prophet is absolutely necessary for the attainment of salvation or heaven, it becomes a sect aud its teachings can not be regarded as universal.

It is on account of the above sublime, universal, rational, and scientific teachings of the Vedas that all sages and seers of India Including Manu, Yajnavalkya, Gautama, Kapila, Veda Vyasa and others have unanimously sung the glory of the Vedas.

QUESTION—11

What are the tests of Revelation ? How can you say that the Vedas alone are Revealed Scriptures ? Why should we not believe the Zend Avesta, the Bible, the Quoran etc. to be equally revealed ?

ANSWER

The tests of Revelation are :

1. It must be revealed in the beginning of human creation. God is the Father of all beings. He is impartial to all His children. He reveals knowledge for the common good of all.

If God does not reveal the Eternal Truths, the un-aided intellect of a man can not grasp them. It is clear, therefore, that God revealed the eternal truths in the beginning of human creation. Prof. Maxmuller though a staunch Christian realised the force of this argument and wrote these remarkable words in his famous book 'Science of Religon.'

'If there is a God who has created heaven and earth, it will be unjust on His part if He deprived millions of souls born before Moses of His Divine Knowledge.'

"Reason and comparative study of religions declare that **God gives Divine Knowledge to mankind from his first appearance on earth.**"

—Prof. Maxmuller in the 'Science of Religion.'

That the Vedas were revealed in the beginning of human creation is the unanimous view of all the sages and seers of India. The Rishis were not the composers of the Mantras, but the persons who made out their secrets and preached them to others. The Vedas being eternal, there can not be any historical references in them.

In the first place, no inspiration is required to write a history. In the second place, taking for granted that an inspiration is required to write a history we can not conceive that God inspired them in such a strange manner that they gave contradictory accounts of the same events in many places.

Thomas Paine has rightly remarked in his most remarkable and distinguished book named 'The Age of Reason' that :

> 'Revelation is a communication of some thing which the person to whom the thing is revealed did not know before, for if I have done a thing or seen it done, it needs no Revelation to tell me, I have done or a seen it done nor enable me to tell it or write it. Revelation, therefore, can not be applied to anything done upon earth, of which man is himself actor or witness and consequently **all the historical part of the Bible** which is almost the whole of it, is not within the meaning and compass of the word Revelation and therefore is not the Word of God.'

—The Age of Reason by Thomas Paine
p. 11.

The same argument holds good with regard to Zend Avesta, the Holy quoran and other scriptures of various sects where the life and teachings of their founders are given.

2. The second chief test of Revelation is that it should not be opposed to science and reason In the Bible we find many irrational dogmas like Trinity, Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ, Resurrection and Redemption by Grace, turning water into wine, feeding four thousand people with four loaves etc. which are opposed to reason and laws of nature and that is why many great scientists like Galileo, Bruno and others and eminent philosophers like Hipatia were persecuted by the Christian Church for preaching scientific principles like the revolution of the earth round the sun and plurality of worlds etc.

3. The Third chief test of Revelation is that there should be no contradictions in it. Now as far as the Bible is concerned, even most distignuished reverend gentlemen like Rev. Sunderland have admitted that :

> 'Both Testaments contain numerous contradictions. They furnish evidence so incontrovertible on the question before us that we shall cite a considerable number.'

'Attention is called to the contradiction between 2 Sam XXIVI and I Chronicle XXI. I.

In one of these passages, we are told that it was the Lord and in the other that it was Satan who prompted David tn do a certain thing, to number or take a

census of Israel. Of course, both statements can not be true unless the Lord and the Satan are the same being.

—Origin and Character of the Bible by Rev.
Sunder land p. 252-253.

The same is the case with many dogmas and beliefs of our Mohammedan friends who believe implicitly in the Holy quoran which according to them says :

'Verily God has cursed the unbelievers and prepared for them a blazing fire.

To dwell there in for ever, no protection will they find.'

—Holy Quran translated by Yusuf Ali.
Vol. III, P. 1121.

Can such dogmas lead to universal love and world peace ?

To believe that all scriptures are equally Revealed when they differ on fundamental matters like the conception of God, non-violence and meat-eating, rebirth, immortallty of soul etc. and when there are so many contradictions in them, is to do violence to reason in order to please all.

We should not hate any one but should be seekers after truth and shonld accept truth and reject untruth. 'The Path of Truth is not the path of cheap popularity.' Of course, there are good teachings in

various religions which should be accepted unhesitatingly.

The same reverend gentleman has stated regarding the Gospels of the new Testament :

'So very marked and significant are contradictions between the first three Gospels and the fourth, that if the former are to be taken as giving in main a true picture, the latter can neither be historical nor the production of an eye witness.'

—Origin and Character of the Bible.

While the Vedas are eternal, the Zend Avesta of the Parasi is about 8000 years old, the old Testament of the Bible about 6000 years, the new Testament less than 2000 and the Quoran about 1350 years old. They can not rherefore be regarded as Revealed Scriptures, through they contain some good teachings which should be accepted by all lovers of truth, while the rest which are not rational and true should be rejected.

QUESTION—12

How can you call the Vedas as universal scriptures when according to the orthodox scholars, all persons born in Shudra families and women are not entitled to study them ? Is that view correct and upheld by the Vedas ?

ANSWER

The view held by some othodox Pandits that all persons born in Shudra families and women are not

entitled to study the Vedas is entirely wrong and against the teachings of the Vedas which declare :

यथेमां वाचं कल्याणीमावदानि जनेभ्यः ।
ब्रह्मराजन्याभ्यां शूद्राय चार्याय चारणाय च स्वाय ।।
यजु० २६-२

God says addressing all men :

'As I have given this most auspicious Vedic Wisdom for the good of all people whether Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Shudras and women, so you should also teach and preach them to all.

पंचजना मम होत्रं जुषध्वम् ।। ऋ० १०. ५३. ४

Let all people belonging to the class of the Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Shudras and those who are out of the pale of these classes being sinners, listen lovingly to my message conveyed through the Vedas and perform Yajnas etc.

Addressing women, the Yajurveda 14. 2. says :

अभित्वा रुद्रावसवो गृणन्त्विमा ब्रह्म पीपिहि सौभगाया-
श्विनावध्वर्यू सादयतामिह त्वा ।।
यजु० १४-२

Drink the nectar of the Vedas for attaining true prosperity. Let noble teachers and preachers teach you the Vedas to such an extent that all highly learned

persons may praise you for your scholarship or proficiency of the Vedic knowledge.

In the Atharva Veda 14. 1. 64 addressing newly wed women it is said :

ब्रह्मापरं युज्यतां ब्रह्मपूर्वं ब्रह्मान्ततो मध्यतो ब्रह्म सर्वतः ।
अनाव्याधां देवपुरां प्रपद्य शिवा स्योना पतिलोके विराज ॥
अथर्व० १४-१-६८

Let the whole atmosphere of your homes be full of the Vedic knowledge. Let there be the Vedic study at the beginning, middle and end of your days' work.

Study of the Vedas be established at your homes, being healthy, happy, and giver of joy to all.

From the historical point of view also it is well-known that as the Rishis were seers of the secret of the Vedic Mantras, there were many Rishikas (female seers) who gave out the secret of the Vedas to the people. A long list of their names is given in Brihad-devata and other books saying :

गोधा घोषा विश्ववारा, अपालोपनिषन्निषत् ।
ब्रह्मजायाजुहूर्नाम, अगस्त्यस्वसादितिः ॥
इन्द्राणीवेन्द्रमाता च, ब्रह्मवादिन्यईरिताः ॥
बृहद्देवता २. ८४

Godha, Ghosha, Vishvavara, Apala, Upanishat, Nishat, Juhoo, Aditi, Indrani, Shachi etc. were Brahma Vadinis i. e. Knowers of God and the Vedas.

Therefore, the orthodox view regarding the matter is absolutely wrong. It is a matter of joy that even among the Sanatanist Pandits Panditraj Swami Bhagvadacharyaji (translator of the Yajurveda and Sama Veda). Swami Maheshananda Giri (Author of four Upanishat Shatakas of the four Vedas in Sanskrit and Hindi). Swami Vijnana Bhikshu ji (formerly known as Pandit Choodamani ji Shastri Principal Sanatan Dharma College Multan). Pt. Ganga Prasadji Shastri (President of the Sanatan Dharma Mandala of Delhi) and many others have openly declared in their books that all men and women are entitled to study the Vedas.

QUESTION—13

Have the Vedas any thing to do with the material and social sciences ? Is there mention of steamers, aircrafts and electricity etc. in the Vedas ? if so, please give a few clear references.

ANSWER

As stated before, the Vedas are the source not only of the spiritual science, but also of the material sciences as they are also necessary for worldly prosperity.

In Rigveda 1.46, 7 and 8 :

आ नो नावा मतीनां यातं पाराय गन्तवे ।
युंजातामश्विना रथम् ।।

अरित्रं वा दिवस्पृथु तीर्थे सिन्धूनां रथः ।
धिया युयुज्र इन्दवः ॥

ऋ० १-४६-७८

It is stated that sailors and boatmen should maintain boats and steamers for the people to cross waters and charioteers are required to keep conveyances for travelling on land.

Artisans are enjoined to provide air-planes for travelling by air and to maintain boats and ships for crossing rivers and oceans.

In Rigveda 1. 23. 2 we read :

उभा देवा दिविस्पृशेन्द्रवायू हवामहे ।
अस्य सोमस्य पीतये ॥

ऋ० १-२३-३

For the attainment of comfort, fire and air carry the air plane into the sky or atmosphere.

In Rigveda 1. 120. 10 we are told ;

अश्विनोरसनं रथमनश्वं वाजिनीवतोः ।
तेनाहं भूरि चाकन ॥

Substance :

Scientific persons should manufacture such vehicles as would run with ease and comfort, with such

machinery as would take them fast with the help of electricity.

Scientific people, who are masters of fire, water and electricity should manufacture such machinery as would raise the water up for various purposes and vehicles capable of running without horses.

The king and the subjects desire to become strong and powerful by possessing scientific arts, power-creating machinery and vehicles that will run without horses.

Some people are under the wrong impression that it is only Swami Dayananda Saraswati that found sciences in the Vedas and it was his own wild imagination. But the fact is that many non-Aryasamajist but impartial scholars have come to the same conclusion and have expressed their views clearly regarding various sciences in the Vedas.

For instance, Shri Narayan Rao Bhawani Rao (N. B.) Pavagi a renowned Maharashtrian scholar has stated in his introduction to the 'Vedic Fathers of Geology.

'I may take this opportunity to remind the reader, without fear of contradiction that the Vedas contain manythings not yet known to any body, as they form a mine of inexhaustible literary wealth that has only been partially opened and has still remained inexplored.'

—'The Vedic Fathers of Glology' Introduction by N. B. Pavagi PVI.

Shri Pamjam Narayan Gowda M. A. B. Sc. in his famous book 'Introduction to the Message of the 20th century, has proved that the Vedas are treatise on the exact sciences. He has stated that :

'The Rigveda deals with the theories and experiments while the process of preparing the reagents and apparatus is recorded in the Yajurveda which is in effect a laboratory guide.'

Dr. V. G. Rele L. M. F. S. F. C. P. S. in his distinguished book 'Vedic gods as Figures of biology' has proved the Vedas to be the origin of Biology.

His Holiness Jagad Guru Shankaracharya of Jagannath Puri-Shri Abhinava Tirtha has written a scholarly book on the Vedic mathematics. Those who would like to study the subject in detail should study these and other books like 'Material Sciences in the Vedas' by Shri Panna Lal Parihar, the Sciences in the Vedas by Shri Hans Raj and Sciences in the Vedas by Acharya Vaidya Nath Shastri and others.

QUESTION—14

What are the principal items of the Vedic Philosophy ? What is the nature of God, soul and matter and what is their relationship with one another ?

ANSWER

According to the Vedic Philosophy, there are three eternal entities ब्रह्म (God) आत्मा (Soul) and प्रकृति

(Matter). The relation between God and soul is that of the prevader and the pervaded, the King and his subjects, the preceptor and his pupils, the master and his servants, the father and his children. While God is Omnipresent, Omniscient and Omnipotent, the souls (many in number) are limited in power and knowledge, even while they are endowed with con-sciousness and immortality. The matter which is inanimate is the material cause of the world and is directed by Omniscient God. The souls are free to act, but God as Dispenser of justice awards or punishes them in accordance with their good or bad actions. God is merciful but just at the same time. We have to reap the fruit of the good and bad actions as God is Dispenser of justice. The Vedas teach the law of Karma and re-birth. Emancipation is the summum bonum of life. It consists in the attainment of perfect bliss, freedom from all ignorance, grief and sorrow. The combination of the knowledge, good actions and devotion leads to liberation.

QUESTION—15

Some Western scholars say that the Vedas do not lay stress on sinlessness? Is that true if not, pleass substantiate your statement with necessary references?

ANSWER

It is not at all true that the Vedas do not lay stress on sinlessness. In all the four Vedas thousands of Mantras consist of prayers and teachings regarding

sinlessness. In Rigveda the whole of 1.97 ends with— अपनः शोशुचदघम् (Rig. 1. 97. 1-g) may our sin burn away.

In Yajurveda 3. 45; 4. 4. 4. 23 and other Mantras the prayer is for getting rid of all sins and attaining perfect purity.

यदेनश्चकृमा वयमिदं तदवयजामहे ।।

यजु० ३-४५

चित् पतिर्मा पुनातु वाक् पतिर्मा पुनातु ।।

यजु० ४-४५

परिमाग्ने दुश्चरिताद् बाधस्वा मा सुचरिते भज ।।

यजु० ४-२८

In Samveda 329 and 397.

आदित्यासो युयोतना नो अहंसः ।।

साम० ३६७

घ्नन्तं वृत्राणि ।।

साम० ३२६

And in many other Mantras, the prayer addressed to the enlightened persons is to make us sinless. God is addressed as घ्नन्वृत्राणि or killer of sins. In Atharva Veda 8. 26. 2 we are asked to say—

यो नः पाप्मन् न जहासि तमु त्वा जहिमो वयम् ।

अथर्व० ६. २६. २

i. e. O sin, we cast thee away though thou dost not leave us easily. In 3. 13 of the Atharva Veda the

refrain of the hymn of 12 Mantras is व्यहं सर्वेण पाप्मना i. e. may I get rid of all sin. In Atharva 16, 6. 1 there is the strong determination on the part of devotees of God to be absolutely sinless without delay literally just this day.

अजैष्माद्यासनामाद्याभूमानागसोवयम् ॥

अथर्व० १६. ६. १

Let us conquer today aad enjoy happiness, Let us become free from sin, even today.

So the view held by some Western scholars and their followers that the Vedas do not lay strees on sinlessness is quite wrong.

QUESTION--16

Many Western scholars hold the view that the Atharva Veda is full of black magic and charms; is it true ?

ANSWER

It is not at all true that the Atharva Veda is full of black magic and charms, The meaning of the word ATHARVA is non-violent and steadfast Yogi थर्वतिश्चरतिकर्मा तत्प्रतिषेधः and थर्व-हिंसायाम् So this Veda deals with the science of Yoga and there are many hymns dealing with that subject. It is also called ब्रह्मवेद as there are many hymns in it like : केनसूक्त-स्कन्धसूक्त etc, dealing with the knowledge about God. It is also the origin of

Ayurveda or Science of life. In the Charak Sanhita which is the most eminent book on Ayurveda, it it sta'ed explicitly.

वेदो ह्यथर्वणः चिकित्सां प्राह (चरक संहिता)।

सूत्रस्थान ३०-२०

i. e. Atharva Veda deals with the treatment of dlseases.

In Sushruta Sanhita also which is the other well-known authority on Ayurveda, it is stated :

इहखल्वायुर्वेदो नाम यदुपांगमर्थववेदस्य ॥

चरक संहिता सूत्र स्थान १०

i. e. Ayurveda is the offshoot or branch of Atharva Veda.

In the Atharva Veda we find the mention of Prishna Parni, Apamarga, Anjana, Arundhati, Laksha, Shankha, Kushtha, Pata, Pippali, Kesha drinhini and many other drugs which cure many diseases. What are called charms and substances of black magic are also herbs, drugs or medicines and therefore again and again words like : औषधिः, औषधयः, भेषजम्, वनस्पतिः, etc. have been used with जङ्गडमणिः वारणमणि, दर्भमणि, औदम्बरमणिः etc. in passages like.

अयं मणिर्वरणो विश्वभेषजः ॥

अ० १०-३-३

ततो नो वारयिष्यतेऽयं देवो वनस्पतिः ॥

अ० १०-३-८

दर्भोय उग्र ओषधिः ॥ अ० १९-३८-१

So it is entirely wrong to take them as black magic and charm. They are drugs or herbs which drive away many diseases.

Those who would like to know more in all these matters must study minutely our book–वेदों का यथार्थ स्वरूप published by Dayananda Sansthana–1795. Hardhyan Singh Road, Karol Bagh New Delhi. English version of which is ready awaiting publication, as soon as arragements can be made for it with the help of generous lovers of the Vedas.

QUESTION—17

Are meat–eating and drinking wine sanctioned by the Vedas ? What is the real meaning of soma if not wine or liquor as maintained by many western scholars ?

ANSWER

Meat–eating and drinking wine are not sanctioned by the Vedas, but on the other hand they are strongly condemned and prohibited. In Rigveda 10. 87. 16 it is told—

यः पौरुषेयेण हविषा समङ्क्ते यो अश्व्येन पशुना यातुधानः ।
यो अघ्न्याया भरति क्षीरमग्ने तेषां शीर्षाणि हरसापि वृश्च ॥

ऋग्वेद १०. ८७. १६

which means—

One who partakes of human flesh, flesh of a horse or of any other animal and deprives others of the milk slaughtering cows, O King, if such a fiend does not desist by other means, then even cut off his head by your power. This is the ultimate punishment which can be inflicted upon him.

Even taking eggs is forbidden—

य आमं मांसमदन्ति पौरुषेयं च ये हविः ।
गर्भान् खादन्तिकेशवास्तानितो नाशयामसि ।।

अथर्व० ८. ६. २३

It means that those who eat uncooked flesh, who eat meat cooked by men, who eat eggs that are embryos, do away with this evil addiction of theirs.

When the Vedas enjoin upon us to look upon all beings on earth as our friends as pointed out before—

मित्रस्याहं चक्षुषा सर्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षे ।।

यजु० ३६-१८

How cen they allow us to take meat of animals? So for as beef-eating is concerned, the Vedas use the word AGHNYA for the cows several times which means those that are never to be killed at any cost and prescribe capital punishment for those wicked persons who do so saying—

अन्तकाय गोघातम् ।। —य० ३०-१८

i. e. the killer of the cow may be slain as the last resort if he does not desist from committing that heinous crime even when instructed lovingly. There should be a law prohibiting the slaughter of cows, bulls and other animals.

It has been enacted, to our great joy.

Regarding drinking wine, it should be borne in mind that in the Vedas, drinking is considered to be a great sin as it leads to many evils.

In the well-known Mantra of the Rigveda.

सप्तमर्यादाः कवयस्ततक्षुस्तासामिकामिदभ्यंहुरोगात् ।

Where seven great sins have been referred to सुरापानम् or drinking wine is one of them along with theft, adultery and falsehood.

In another Mantra of the Rigveda, enumerating seven causes leading to sins, सुरा or drinking wine has been mentioned as the second following anger gambling and ignorance etc.

न स स्वो दक्षो वरुणध्रुतिः सा सुरा मन्युर्विभीदको अचित्तिः ॥

ऋ० ७. ८६. ५

The late Shri Madan Mohan Seth M. A., LL. B. Retired Session Judge rightly remarked while quoting this that drinking is condemned as leading and seducing men from the path of virtue like that of dicing and meat-eating.

Pointing out the pernicious effect of drinking wine the Rigveda says—

हृत्सुपीतासो युध्यन्ते दुर्मदासो न सुरायाम् ।
ऊधर्न नग्ना जरन्ते ॥

ऋ० ८. २. १२

i. e. after drinking wine, drunkards fight among themselves. As their physical strength weakens on account of drinking, they soon become prematurely old. They lie naked on the roads at night. It is stated in the Atharva Veda in 6. 7. 1—

यथामांसं यथा सुरा यथाक्षा अधि देवने ।
यथा पुंसोवृषण्यतः स्त्रियां निहन्यते मनः ॥

अथर्व० ६-७-१

Flesh eating, drinking, gambling and adultery all destroy and mar the mental faculties of a man.

It should be remembered that there is world of difference between सोम (Soma) and सुरा (Wine). While as Soma is promoter of the divine virtues and destroyer of sins—

देवावीरघशंसहा ॥

ऋ० ९. २४. ७, साम० ९९७

सुरा (wine) is promoter of sins as stated in the Rigveda.

सुरा अनृतस्य प्रयोता ॥

ऋ० ७. ८०. ६

In the Brahmanas which give the exposition of the Vedas it is clearly stated about सुरा or wine—

अनृतं पाप्मा तमः सुरा ॥

शत० ५. १. २. १०

i. e. drinking wine is a great sin, leading to falsehood and darkness or ignorance.

It is stated further in the Shatapath Brahmana 5. 5. 4. 5—

अभिमाद्यन्निव हिं सुरां पीत्वा भवति ॥

i. e. a man becomes mad and behaves madly after drinking wine.

तस्मात् सुरां पीत्वा रौद्रमनाः ॥

शत० १२-७-३-१०

It means that a man becomes cruel-hearted after drinking wine.

So it is very wrong to think that the Vedas sanction meat-eating and drinking. Soma in the spiritual sense is used for devotion commingled with knowledge in the mantras of the Sama Veda. Even in the Rigveda, it is used in the same sense besides a nourishing and invigorating beverage which is quite different from and unlike wine which has been strongly condemned in all Shastras.

We, therefore never resort to the slaughter of human or other beings and we never tempt any one to go against his duties Such being the case, it is clear that animal sacrifices are not sanctioned by the Vedas and they are opposed to their very spirit.

The question then arises who introduced these animal sacrifices and why ? The answer to the important question is given in the Mahabharata by such a renowed scholar as Bhishma Pitamaha (170. year old) in reply to Yudhisthiras query regarding the subject, he has there stated—

सुरा मत्स्याः पशोर्मांसम्, आसवं कृशरौदनम् ।
धूर्तैः प्रवर्तितं ह्येतद्, नैतद् वेदेषु विद्यते ॥

Mahabharata Shanti Parva, Ch. 363-97.

i. e. Taking wine, fish and flesh of animals, intoxicant drinks of various kinds etc. is not sanctioned by the Vedas at all. It is further stated—

लुब्धैर्वित्तपरैर्ब्रह्मन्, नास्तिकैः संप्रवर्तितम् ।
वेदवादानविज्ञाय, सत्याभासमिवानृतम् ।
सतां वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते, यजन्ते त्वविहिंसया ॥

i. e. Ir is greedy atheistic people hankering after wealth that have introduced the slaughter of animals in the Yajnas which sometimes looks apparently

sanctioned by the Vedas, but which really speaking is entirely false. They have done so being ignorant of the real meaning of the Mantras. Righteous people perform Yajnas non-violently, following into the footsteps of the noble persons.

On Page line 13—instead of deroneous read erroneous.
On Page line 3—read अब्वर instead of अब्वर ।

Printed by : S. C Vaishnava
Manager : Gurukula Kangri Printing Press.
Hardwar.

A NOTE ON THE AUTHOR

Acharya Dharma Deva Vidya Martanda (Now known as Dharma Nanda Sarasvati after his Sanyas on 28-2-1976) is an eminent Vedic Scholar, linguist (knowing about 20 languages including English, French and German) and author of more than 40 books in Hindi, Sanskrit and English. Born at Dunyapur Distt. Multan (now in Pakistan) on 12th Feb. 1901, he graduated with honours from the famous Gurukula Kangri University, Hardwar in 1921 standing first in all subjects and winning two gold medals. On his scholarly thesis on Vedic Science of Ethics and Indian Sociology, he got the Vidya Vachaspati degree. He was awarded the highest doctorate degree of the Vidya Martand in 1954.

He was Acharya of the Gurukula at Multan and Kangri near Bangalore. He worked in S. India as a Vedic Missionary from 1921 to 1941. From 1942 to 1953, he was Asstt. Secretary of the International Aryan League, Delhi and Secretary of the International Aryan Religious League. of which he was unanimously elected President in 1961. He was Editor of the "Sarvadeshik" for 11 years. He was Professor of Veda and Chief Editor of an English, Sanskrit, Hindi Dictionary and the Gurukula Patrika in Sanskrit from 1954 to 1963. He is President of the Central Hindi Protection Committee.

Besides completing the English commentary on Sama Veda all copies af which are now exhausted, he has completed the commentary in English of the Rig-veda in 10916 pages, of which the first volume of 1016 pages has seen the light of the day and the second is now being printed in the Gurukula Press.

He has been unanimously elected the President of the विश्ववेद परिषद or World Vedic Council.

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Ten Principles of the Arya Samaj

1. God is the cause of all Knowlege and of all ... is known through Knowledge.
2. God is Absolute Existence, Omniscient and Blissful, He is Formless, Just, Merciful, Unborn, Endless, Unchangeable, Beginningless, Unequalled, the Support of all, the Lord of all, All-Pervading, All-Controlling, Immortal, Fearless, Eternal, Holy and the Maker of the Universe. To Him alone worship is due.
3. The Vedas are the Scriptures of true Knowledge. It is the paramount duty of all Aryas to read them, teach them, recite them and hear them being read.
4. One should always be ready to accept Truth and to give up Untruth.
5. One should do everything according to the dictates of Dharma (righteousness) i.e. with due regard to Right and Wrong.
6. The primary object of this society is to do good to the whole world i.e. to achieve its physical, spiritual and social progress.
7. One's dealings with all should be regulated by Love and Justice in accordance with the dictates of Dharma (righteousness).
8. One should promote Vidya (Knowledge) and dispel Avidya (ignorance).
9. One should not be contented with one's own welfare, but should look for one's own welfare in the welfare of all.
10. One should regard oneself under restriction in following rules of social welfare, while in following rules of individual welfare, all should be free.